



Fallen trees make for a rugged, although still pleasant, walk at the Lansing Bennett Forest in Duxbury. PHOTO BY KEZIA BACON

THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS

Marathon moments, monuments

REV. DAVID L. TROXLER

My wife and I bought our "617-Boston Strong" T-shirts last week. It seems like the least we could do to lend support to overcome all the craziness we saw unfold just a few miles from us on Marathon Monday. There was an inner need to do something tangible to offer whatever I could to make a difference, no matter how small. After the initial bombing, I signed up to give blood at Children's Hospital, but that was cancelled, for the day of my appointment was when all Boston went into lockdown.

The events we witnessed have changed us. It is well that they should as long as the change is to make us better people.

One of the things people have done, perhaps even some of you reading this, has been to set up a memorial. Moved from its initial location, it is now in Copley Square. Festooned is not the proper word for this, but the cards, the running shoes, the flowers, the crosses and especially the onlookers who just come to be still for a moment all speak to the change that has occurred.

On 9-11, our family was living just outside Pittsburgh. We traveled to the Flight 93 crash site. I felt compelled to leave something there at that impromptu memorial. I was driven to do so. I'm sure this is how many have felt these past two weeks when going to Copley to see the finish line and make a personal pledge to not be defeated by tyranny.

It is not unlike a story we find in the Bible. From the last half of Joshua 22, we read about three of the tribes of Israel. They have set up a monument as a marker to remind all of them about God's provision through the difficulty of entering the Promised Land. We read that their marker was to be a witness for that generation and the ones to come that they served the Lord. When push came to shove in the most trying of times, their marker was about how they remained strong for the task before them, how they had kept their faith despite blows against it.

Being "Boston Strong" is more than just a slogan; it has to do with faithfulness to keep going. Keep going to where? That is the question - the unknown future. That is why we set up monuments and markers. They remind us of moments like 2:50 p.m. April 15, 2013, and tell us, we came through that, so we will make it. We are stronger than that.

The best part, however, is this: Even when we don't feel strong, the Bible promises us that God will make his strength perfect in our weakness. I rely on that promise. I hope you do, too.

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